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QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 23 April 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would like to bring to your attention the recent decision by the Government of Israel, the occupying Power, on Thursday, 22 April 1999, to issue closure orders against offices at the Orient House in East Jerusalem.

This dangerous and provocative decision is not only a provocation against the Palestinian people, it is also a gross violation of international law and United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, as well as of the agreements reached between the two parties. In this context, I would like to refer to the letter sent by Mr. Peres, then the Israeli Foreign Minister, to Mr. Holst, the Foreign Minister of Norway, which confirmed that, as part of the agreements, "the Palestinian institutions of East Jerusalem and the interests and well-being of the Palestinians of East Jerusalem are of great importance and will be preserved. Therefore, all the Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem, including social, economic, educational and cultural, and the holy Christian and Muslim places, are performing an essential task for the Palestinian population. Needless to say, we will not hamper their activities".

The United Nations Security Council has adopted numerous resolutions reaffirming the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to all the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, including Jerusalem. Specifically, the Security Council has adopted sixteen resolutions regarding Jerusalem and has repeatedly declared that all measures and arrangements taken by Israel, the occupying Power, aimed at changing the legal status, demographic composition and

character of the city are null and void and without any legal validity whatsoever.

Such continuing provocative actions and measures are illegal under international law and undermine and violate the principles of the Middle East peace process. The Security Council, as the body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, is under the obligation to take appropriate measures in this regard to protect the already frail peace process.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 39, 40 and 84, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Marwan JILANI
Chargé d'affaires a.i.